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Career Opportunities for Veterinarians in the Agricultural Research Service



Miscellaneous Publication No. 727

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREWORD

In this pamphlet you will find—

A brief description of the functions of the Agricultural Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

A summary of the activities and some accomplishments of this organization in veterinary medicine.

Information about the opportunities for careers in veterinary medicine that exist within the organization, and about the advantages of employment in the Federal civil service.

If you are a student of veterinary medicine, I suggest that you read this pamphlet carefully, and that you refer to it from time to time as you plan your career. Discuss it with your fellow students.

I believe that after reading it you will agree that veterinarians in the Agricultural Research Service have an excellent opportunity to build successful, rewarding careers. In considering the advantages of Government employment, do not overlook the satisfaction to be derived from the knowledge that your work contributes to the welfare of the entire Nation.

Byron T. Shaw

BYRON T. SHAW,
Administrator, Agricultural Research Service.

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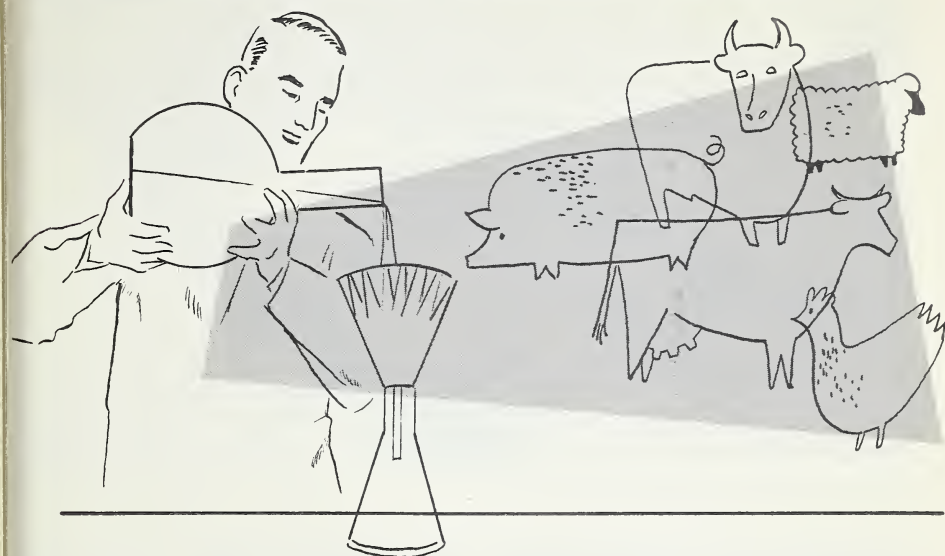
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Career Opportunities for Veterinarians in the Agricultural Research Service



INTRODUCTION

The Agricultural Research Service conducts fundamental and applied research in the production and utilization of agricultural products. It administers control and regulatory programs closely related to this research. These programs include enforcement of plant and animal quarantines, inspection of meat, and control and eradication of diseases and insect pests of animals and plants. The Agricultural Research Service also administers the Federal statutes granting funds for the support of agricultural research by experiment stations of the various States and Territories.

Work is carried on in Washington, D. C., in the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Md., in more than 600 other locations in the

United States and its Territories and possessions, and in more than a dozen foreign countries. Most of the work is cooperative with State agricultural experiment stations, State departments of agriculture, or other organizations.

About 14,000 people are employed by the Agricultural Research Service on a full-time basis. About one-tenth of them are veterinarians. They comprise the largest single professional group in the organization. Most of the employees are located in field stations, experimental farms, and laboratories throughout the United States.

The Agricultural Research Service is a relatively new organization, which carries on well-established programs. It was formed by the



Mixing samples for brucellosis "ring test."

RN-1156

consolidation of various bureaus and parts of agencies during a reorganization of the Department of Agriculture late in 1953.

Young men trained in veterinary medicine find excellent opportunities for successful careers under the civil-service merit system in the Agricultural Research Service. In this organization you will find progressive policies, sound personnel practices, and a continuing interest in you as an individual. You will derive great personal satisfaction in doing important work that is beneficial to the general public. You will have many opportunities to make full use of your knowledge, innate ability, and professional talents, and to contribute new accomplishments in your chosen field.

By guarding the health of livestock, veterinarians guard the health

of consumers. Those in private practice do an effective job of keeping pace with new problems in animal disease. But those in public service have an added responsibility: to solve research problems and develop control techniques that require the efforts of many people, often in different places. Also, they are responsible for the solution of problems that fall naturally into the public domain and others that must, by law, be handled by public authorities.

Progressive-minded men with initiative, efficiency, and capacity for leadership can be assured of advancement. We are seeking young veterinarians with these qualities and we make every effort to assign them to geographical areas of their preference. Listen carefully to our representative when he discusses employment possibilities with you.

SOME ACHIEVEMENTS OF GOVERNMENT VETERINARIANS

The veterinary medical forces that are now part of the Agricultural Research Service have gained worldwide recognition for their accomplishments. A few are mentioned below.

Eradication of pleuropneumonia. This disease appeared on the Eastern Seaboard in the 1850's and in 35 years spread as far west as Missouri. In 1884, the Department of Agriculture inaugurated animal disease work to fight this disease and, through a Federal-State eradication program, stamped it out by 1892.

Eradication of tick fever. Department of Agriculture veterinarians established the fact that cattle tick fever is transmitted by the bite of the cattle tick. Eradication of the ticks eliminated cattle tick fever from the United States and opened the South to profitable production of livestock.

Control of hog cholera. Department of Agriculture scientists discovered the cause of hog cholera and developed a serum-virus vaccine to immunize against it.

Eradication of foot-and-mouth disease. This disease, which invaded



N-14409

Vaccinating calf for brucellosis. The vaccine is Strain 19.



N-2743

Inoculating sterile veal infusion broth with blood drawn from a brucellosis-affected hog.

the United States nine times between 1870 and 1929, has been eradicated since the beginning of the 20th century by the stamping-out method. This method is recognized the world over as the only one by which the disease can be eradicated.

Elimination of hyperkeratosis (X-Disease) of cattle. A research group consisting of veterinarians of the Department of Agriculture and 18 States discovered that the cause of this disease was the highly chlorinated naphthalene used in lubricants. The disease has been eradicated since 1954, when oil companies stopped using this additive in lubricants that might get to farm animals.

Control of bovine brucellosis. This

disease is on the decrease in the United States because of the Department's testing program, development of Strain 19 vaccine, use of the "ring test" on composite milk samples, the practice of sending diseased cows to slaughter, and an expanded Federal-State cooperative program.

Control of bovine tuberculosis. This disease, prevalent throughout the Nation at the inception of a tuberculosis eradication program in 1917, has been reduced to such an extent that today only 1 animal in approximately 1,000 tested is found to be infected.

Control of internal parasites of sheep. After 12 years of testing, Department of Agriculture scientists have determined that internal

parasites of sheep can be largely controlled by the use of phenothiazine mixed with salt, put before the animals on a free-choice basis.

Wholesomeness and cleanliness of meat and meat food products. Meat inspection began in the United States in 1891 in order to gain acceptance for American meats in foreign markets. Since then, Department of Agriculture veterinar-

ians have guided and developed a meat inspection program that is accepted throughout the United States and in every country in the world. Thus, the American farmer is assured of a continuing market for his livestock, and the consumer is assured of wholesomeness, freedom from disease, and cleanliness of meat and meat food products prepared under Federal supervision.



80931-R

A carcass that has been inspected and condemned by a veterinary meat inspector.

THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

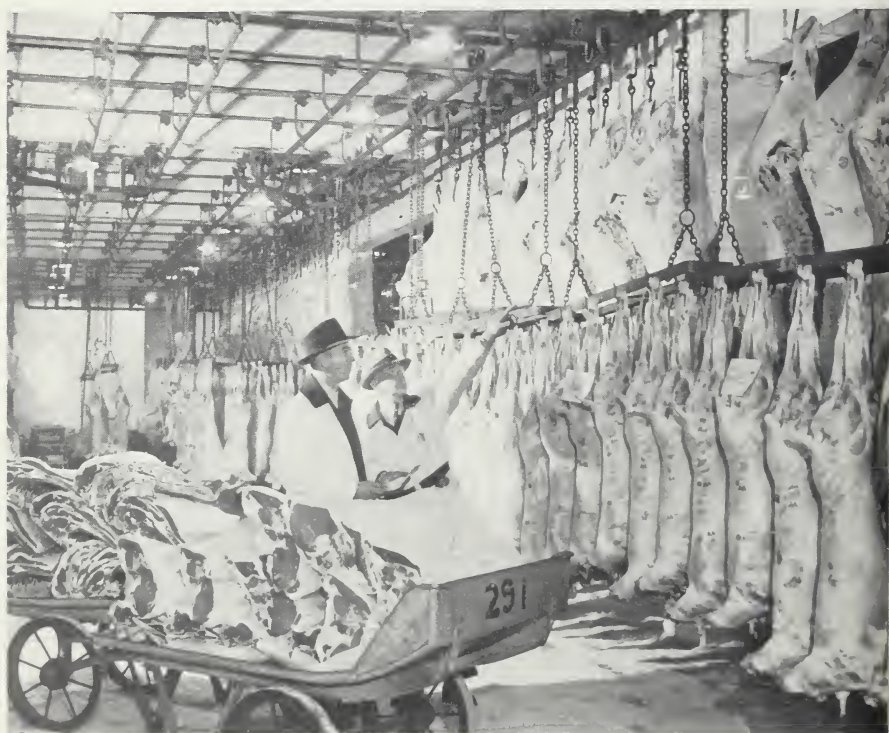
The Agricultural Research Service has a constant need for young graduates in veterinary medicine. Veterinary positions must be filled in order to combat outbreaks and potential outbreaks of animal disease, to conduct research for the control and eradication of diseases, and to continue the vital job of protecting the Nation's food supply.

The Agricultural Research Service offers you a wide choice of branches of veterinary science in which to pursue your career. The work is organized in 3 regulatory branches and 1 research branch.

The functions of these branches are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Meat Inspection Branch

This Branch employs the largest number of veterinarians. Its major task is to assure the wholesomeness, freedom from disease, and cleanliness of meat and meat food products prepared under Federal supervision. Veterinarians in the meat inspection program examine approximately 80 percent of all animals slaughtered commercially for



Meat in refrigerated storage awaiting shipment. It has been inspected and passed by Federal meat inspectors.



N-10201

Veterinarian inspecting "U. S. Retained" carcasses set aside for special consideration—one of the steps in Federal meat inspection.

food in the United States. Inspectors are employed in all establishments that prepare meat or meat food products for sale in interstate or foreign commerce. All animals are inspected before slaughter, and those that are unfit are condemned. At the time of slaughter, an examination is made of every carcass and its viscera; only meat from healthy animals, produced under sanitary conditions, can be used for food. Unfit meat is destroyed under the supervision of a veterinarian. Meat food products also are inspected during preparation to insure sanitary handling, destruction of unfit products, enforcement of measures for informative labeling, and freedom from adulteration. The Meat Inspection Branch, which conducts essential activities of tremendous importance to the health of the

Nation, has been widely acclaimed for its efficiency in safeguarding consumers against unwholesome meat and meat food products.

Animal Disease Eradication Branch

This Branch employs a large number of veterinarians. It conducts nationwide cooperative programs to control and eradicate livestock diseases—for example, brucellosis, vesicular exanthema, scrapie, blue tongue, scabies, tuberculosis, and several other diseases. Twice since 1946 programs have been conducted in cooperation with the Republic of Mexico to eradicate outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease in that country. The Branch regulates the interstate movement of livestock to detect and prevent the spread of communicable diseases of livestock. The eradication programs have been of inestimable value to the country from the standpoint of economy in the livestock industry and in terms of human health and welfare.

Animal Inspection and Quarantine Branch

This Branch employs many veterinarians. It protects the livestock and poultry industries of the United States from diseases of foreign origin and regulates the inspection, humane treatment, and safe transport of animals for export. One of the objectives of this work is to exclude from the United States dangerous infections, such as foot-and-mouth disease and rinderpest, which would



Veterinarian examining cattle being shipped by airplane.

11177-A

curtail the production of livestock and livestock products. This Branch also regulates the production of biological products for the treatment of domestic animals. The Animal Inspection and Quarantine Branch is accorded much credit for its effective operations in guarding against the introduction of destructive diseases of foreign origin.

Animal Disease and Parasite Research Branch

This Branch employs the veterinarians engaged in research on diseases and parasites that affect domestic animals, poultry, and fur-bearing animals raised in captivity. It seeks to learn how infectious

diseases and harmful parasites are transmitted. It develops and improves methods of diagnosis, control, prevention, and eradication of diseases and conditions caused by bacteria, viruses, rickettsia, fungi, and parasites. The Plum Island Animal Disease Laboratory, northeast of Long Island, N. Y., is a part of this Branch. This laboratory, which began operation in 1954, specializes in research on vesicular stomatitis and foot-and-mouth disease. Throughout the years scientists engaged in activities comprising the Animal Disease and Parasite Research Branch have gained worldwide fame for their research discoveries and outstanding accomplishments.

SALARY AND PROMOTION

Veterinary positions in the Agricultural Research Service are in the competitive civil service. They are classified into grades of the General Schedule (GS) according to the difficulty and responsibility of the duties. A salary range is assigned to each grade. The grades and salaries that are applicable to veterinarians are given in table 1.

A new employee usually is paid the beginning rate for his grade. For GS-7 the normal entrance salary is \$4,525 per year, but the entrance pay rate for GS-7 veterinary positions has been established by special approval of the U. S. Civil Service Commission at \$5,200.

The Agricultural Research Service recruits veterinarians in grades GS-7 and GS-9. To qualify for appointment in GS-7 the applicant must have a degree from a recognized veterinary college or university. For appointment in GS-9, he

must have had at least 1 year of professional veterinary experience after graduation.

The GS-7 veterinary positions are considered training positions in the Agricultural Research Service. Veterinarians hired in this grade are trained for 6 months. If their services are satisfactory, they are then eligible for promotion to GS-9 at a beginning salary of \$5,440 per year. This is permitted under a special arrangement with the Civil Service Commission.

GS-9 is regarded as the lowest operating grade for veterinarians in the Agricultural Research Service. You can readily understand, therefore, that a veterinarian appointed or promoted to that grade would be just starting on his career. Opportunities for further advancement are increasingly favorable.

Naturally, your promotion to higher grades will depend primarily

TABLE 1.—*Annual salary rates, by grades, of positions occupied by veterinarians in the Agricultural Research Service as of November 1956*

Grade (GS)	Salary rates within grade									
	Regular salary rates						Longevity salary rates			
7						\$5, 200	\$5, 335	\$5, 470	\$5, 605	\$5, 740
9	\$5, 440	\$5, 575	\$5, 710	\$5, 845	\$5, 980	6, 115	6, 250	6, 385	6, 520	6, 655
11	6, 390	6, 605	6, 820	7, 035	7, 250	7, 465		7, 680	7, 895	8, 110
12	7, 570	7, 785	8, 000	8, 215	8, 430	8, 645		8, 860	9, 075	9, 290
13	8, 990	9, 205	9, 420	9, 635	9, 850	10, 065		10, 280	10, 495	10, 710
14	10, 320	10, 535	10, 750	10, 965	11, 180	11, 395		11, 610	11, 825	12, 040
15	11, 610	11, 880	12, 150	12, 420	12, 690			12, 905	13, 120	13, 335
16	12, 900	13, 115	13, 330	13, 545	13, 760					
17	13, 975	14, 190	14, 405	14, 620	14, 835					
18	16, 000									



Inspector supervising the testing of hog cholera virus for purity.

12984-A

on your performance in relation to others in your grade. The opportunities exist; it is up to you to take advantage of them. The door to advancement will be open to you if you properly demonstrate progressive attitude, productivity, efficiency, initiative, and leadership. This is a challenge. You know whether you are equal to it. In planning your career, think about this opportunity and the desirability of becoming associated with the Agricultural Research Service.

At regular intervals the employee is promoted to the higher salary rates within his classification grade. Within-grade promotions occur every 52 weeks in grade GS-9 and every 78 weeks in GS-11 and above until the top regular salary rate of the grade is reached. At the end of 10 years, 3 of which are at the top regular salary rate, the employee in grades up to and including GS-15 receives a longevity increase. He receives 2 more such increases at 3-year intervals.

REGULAR INCOME

In the Agricultural Research Service you are reasonably sure of a regular income, which may be depended on year after year, provided your services and conduct

are satisfactory. You are paid every 2 weeks on established pay-days. A regular income is important to consider when you plan your career as a veterinarian.

HOURS OF DUTY

The regular work week in the Federal civil service is 40 hours. Employees work 8 hours a day, from Monday through Friday. If you are required to work extra hours, you receive additional pay or compensatory time off.

Employees are given eight Na-

tional holidays each year: New Year's Day, Washington's Birthday, Decoration Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas. When any of these falls on Sunday, the holiday is observed the following Monday.

LEAVE BENEFITS

The leave benefits are designed to maintain at a high level the health, efficiency, and morale of employees.

Annual Leave

Each year, employees earn annual leave, for vacation and other pur-

poses, as follows: Those with less than 3 years of service, 13 days; those with 3 to 15 years, 20 days; those with 15 years or more, 26 days.

Annual leave may be taken in units of 1 or more hours. Any that is not used in a year may be accumulated up to a limit of 30



N-12608

Examining lesions of hog's feet to detect vesicular exanthema infection.



N-2735

Veterinarian inoculating culture media with blood drawn aseptically from swine affected with brucellosis.

days. If an employee leaves Government service he is paid a lump sum for the amount of his accumulated annual leave.

Sick Leave

Each year, you will earn 13 days of sick leave, for use in case of serious illness and for appointments with a doctor, dentist, or optician. Unused sick leave accumulates without limit and provides employees financial protection for periods of prolonged illness.

Military Leave

If you are a member of the National Guard or of the Reserves

of the Army, Air Force, or Navy, you are entitled to military leave for training, instruction, and field exercises. A maximum of 15 calendar days is allowed each year with full pay and without charge against annual leave.

Educational Leave

You may be granted leave without pay for full-time graduate work or other advanced study related to your duties, provided you intend to return to your job. This type of leave helps employees to improve their job performance and to increase their opportunities for advancement within the Agricultural Research Service.

MEDICAL AND COMPENSATION BENEFITS

A service-connected illness or injury entitles an employee to medical attention, hospitalization, and compensation. These benefits cost you nothing. The compensation payment is about two-thirds of an employee's salary, and, at the

employee's request, it may replace sick leave at any time after the third day of absence from duty.

These benefits are especially important to veterinarians, because their duties are more or less hazardous.



Veterinarian measuring the reaction to johnin by laboratory animal given experimental injection.

GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

Life insurance is available at low cost to full-time veterinarians in the Agricultural Research Service. No action need be taken by an employee to get the insurance. No medical examination is required.

The amount of insurance depends on the employee's basic salary and is computed in multiples of \$1,000. For example, an employee whose annual salary is in the range of

\$5,001 to \$6,000, inclusive, is insured for \$6,000. You pay 25 cents each payday for each \$1,000 of insurance. The premium is deducted from your pay. The Federal Government contributes half as much as employees.

This insurance is not mandatory, but most employees take advantage of it to help provide economic security for their families.

RETIREMENT SYSTEM

The Federal civil-service retirement system is sound and attractive. It is one of the outstanding advantages of Federal employment. You should consider it seriously when you plan a career in veterinary medicine.

Some of the highlights of the retirement system are summarized below:

1. You may retire on full annuity at any time after the age of 60 provided you have had 30 or more years of service.

2. You may retire on reduced annuity at any time between age 55 and 60, after 30 or more years of service. The reduction in annuity is about 1 percent for each year under the age of 60. For example, if you retire at the age of 55 you would receive about 95 percent (a reduction of about 5 percent) of the full annuity.

3. You may retire on full annuity at any time after the age of 62 provided you have had 5 or more years of service.

4. You may retire on an annuity (as described below) regardless of age after 5 or more years of service, if you become totally disabled for useful and efficient service.

5. You must retire at age 70 after 15 or more years of service, and you will receive full annuity.

6. If you leave Federal Government service after 5 years and before becoming eligible for retirement, you will be entitled to an annuity when you reach the age of 62. You may elect to receive a refund of your retirement deductions and accrued interest in lieu of a future annuity. If you leave before completing 5 years of service, you will receive the refund, since you will not be eligible for a future annuity.

7. The amount of annuity, except for disability retirement, is computed by taking the following percentages of the average salary for the 5 highest consecutive years, multiplying the results by the number of years of service indicated

below, and adding the totals so obtained:

1½ percent of average salary multiplied by first 5 years of service.

1¼ percent of average salary multiplied by next 5 years of service.

2 percent of average salary multiplied by all remaining years of service.

In no case may the annuity exceed 80 percent of the average salary. Table 2 shows the amount of annuity that you can receive under this formula; the amount depends on your average salary and number of years of service. In case of disability retirement, the minimum annuity payable is the lesser of the following: 40 percent of average salary for the 5 highest consecutive years or the amount of annuity (as computed under the general formula given above) that the employee would have received at age 60 had he remained in the service until then. An annuity larger than the minimum for disability retirement is payable if it has been actually earned by the employee in

accordance with the general formula given above.

8. If an employee dies after he has completed 5 years of service or more, his widow and/or dependent children are eligible for annuity benefits. If he leaves no widow or dependent children, the refund consisting of his retirement deductions and accrued interest is paid to his designated beneficiary.

9. Employees and the Government contribute jointly to the retirement fund. Your share would be 6½ percent of your salary; this amount is automatically deducted from each pay.

This information gives you an idea of the advantages of the Federal retirement system. The deductions are an excellent investment; you may understand this better by comparing the cost of annuities of standard insurance firms. This retirement plan assures you of a regular income for yourself and your family during the later years of life. Think carefully about it when you plan your career as a veterinarian.

TABLE 2.—*Amounts of annuity receivable, by salary and years of service*¹

Highest average salary	Amount of annuity receivable after specified years of service		
	30	40	45
\$6,000-----	\$3, 375	\$4, 575	\$4, 800
\$7,000-----	3, 937	5, 337	5, 600
\$8,000-----	4, 500	6, 100	6, 400
\$9,000-----	5, 062	6, 862	7, 200
\$10,000-----	5, 625	7, 625	8, 000

¹ These amounts apply if retirement occurs at age 60 or over.

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT FOR STUDENTS

Each summer the Agricultural Research Service employs a limited number of students who have completed the junior year at veterinary college. The students are paid a grade GS-5 salary at the rate of \$3,670 per year. Students are given the opportunity of assisting experienced veterinarians and obtaining practical experience and first-hand information.

Before the end of the school year,

a representative of the Agricultural Research Service will furnish information to junior students about the activities and locations available. Take one of these summer jobs if the opportunity is presented. Learn for yourself that the Agricultural Research Service is a good place in which to work and that it offers attractive careers in veterinary medicine.



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